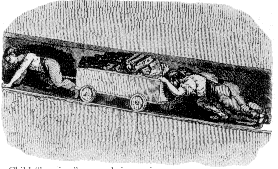
**Child Labour and the Industrial Revolution**

Many factory workers were children. They worked long hours and were often treated badly by the supervisors or overseers. Sometimes the children started work as young as five or six years old. A young child could not earn much, but even a few pence would be enough to buy food.

**Coal Mines**   
The coal mines were dangerous places where roofs sometimes caved in, explosions happened and workers got all sorts of injuries. There were very few safety rules. Cutting and moving coal which machines do nowadays was done by men, women and children.   
    The younger children often worked as "*trappers*" who worked trap doors. They sat in a hole hollowed out for them and held a string which was fastened to the door. When they heard the coal wagons coming they had to open the door by pulling a string. This job was one of the easiest down the mine but it was very lonely and the place where they sat was usually damp and draughty. Often children got a disease called Black Lung. This is a disease which is contracted when a person spends a lot of time breathing in coal mine dust. The person will have lack of breath and a very bad cough.  
    Older children might be employed as "*coal bearers*" carrying loads of coal on their backs in big baskets.

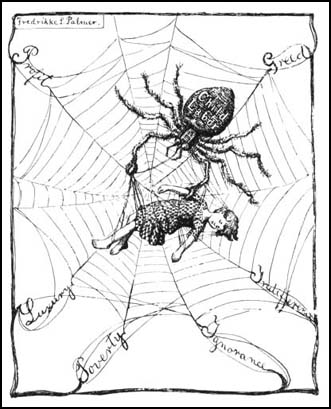
**Mills**   
While thousands of children worked down the mine, thousands of others worked in the cotton mills. The mill owners often took in orphans to their workhouses; they lived at the mill and were worked as hard as possible. They spent most of their working hours at the machines with little time for fresh air or exercise. Even part of Sunday was spent cleaning machines. There were some serious accidents, some children were scalped when their hair was caught in the machine, hands were crushed and some children were killed when they went to sleep and fell into the machine.

**Factories and Brick Works**   
Children often worked long and gruelling hours in factories and had to carry out some hazardous jobs. The equipment the used was usually very big and heavy. In match factories children were employed to dip matches into a chemical called phosphorous. This phosphorous could cause their teeth to rot and some died from the effect of breathing it into their lungs. Children were also prone to getting cholera. Cholera is caused by the bacteria Vibrio cholera and it affects the small intestine. It occurs when a place has bad sanitation, war, famine or over-crowding of people. It is a serious condition and can lead to death.

**Chimney Sweeps**   
Although in 1832 the use of boys for sweeping chimneys was forbidden by law, boys continued to be forced through the narrow winding passages of chimneys in large houses. When they first started at between five and ten years old, children suffered many cuts, grazes and bruises on their knees, elbows and thighs however after months of suffering their skin became hardened.

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**Street Children**   
Hordes of dirty, ragged children roamed the streets with no regular money and no home to go to. The children of the streets were often orphans with no-one to care for them. They stole or picked pockets to buy food and slept in outhouses or doorways. Charles Dickens wrote about these children in his book "Oliver Twist".   
    Some street children did jobs to earn money. They could work as crossing-sweepers, sweeping a way through the mud and horse dung of the main paths to make way for ladies and gentlemen. Others sold lace, flowers, matches or muffins etc out in the streets.  
  
**Country Children**   
Poor families who lived in the countryside were also forced to send their children out to work. Seven and eight year olds could work as bird-scares, out in the fields from four in the morning until seven at night. Older ones worked in gangs as casual labourers.

**Changes for the better**   
It took time for the government to decide that working children should be protected by laws as many people did not see anything wrong with the idea of children working. They felt parents had a right to send their children out to work as another way of bringing extra money home. People such as Lord Shaftesbury and Sir Robert Peel worked hard to persuade the public that it was wrong for children to suffer health problems and to miss out on schooling due to work.

***Activity***

([Fredrikke Palmer](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAWpalmer.htm), [*Women's Journal*](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAWjournal.htm) - 1916)

* Can you explain what you think is happening in this picture?
* Why are the words around the web important when talking about child labour?

-profit

-greed

-luxury

-poverty

-ignorance

-indifference

**Child Labour Quiz**

1. What country did child labour start in?

* Germany
* Great Britain
* Austria

1. What were the three main places where children worked?
   * Coal mines, houses and mills
   * Coal mines, mills and factories
   * Coal mines, offices and churches
2. Working in factories would make you prone to getting?
   * Common Cold
   * Scarlet Fever
   * Cholera
3. What was the youngest age for a child labourer to start?

* 9
* 5
* 12

1. A coal miner has a better chance of getting what disease than the average person?

* Black lung
* Influenza
* Skin cancer

1. Children used very \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_ equipment.
   * Small and light
   * Big and heavy
   * Orange and blue
2. Why did parents make their kids work? And what about them?

* They were mean parents
* They were lazy parents
* The parents worked and wanted another way of bringing extra money home

1. What did the disease cholera affect in the body?
   * Small intestine
   * Head
   * Heart
2. Around what year did child labour start?
   * 1800
   * 1700
   * 1750
3. While working in the factories children did not have the opportunity to \_\_\_?
   * Get an education
   * Play sports
   * All the above